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A  
LETTER

unto a PERSON of

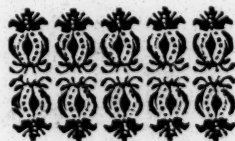
Honour & Quality,

Containing some

ANIMADVERSIONS

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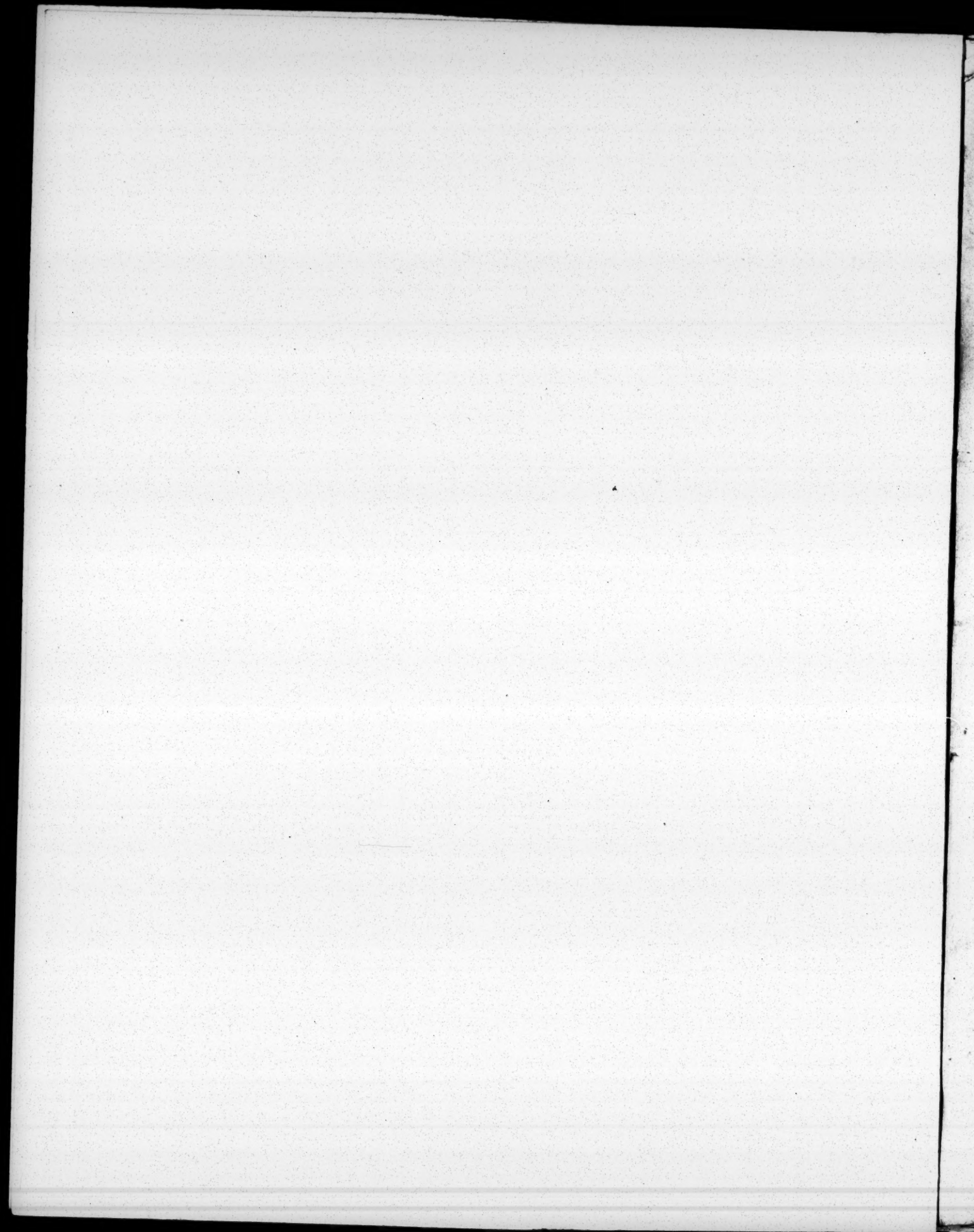
Bishop of Worcester's  
LETTER.



*Edward Bagshaw*

LONDON,

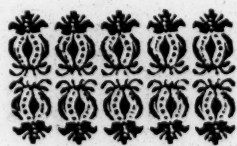
Printed in the Year, 1662.



*Edw. Bayeslaw*  
*1562*

A  
LETTER  
unto a PERSON of  
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Containing some  
ANIMADVERSIONS  
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Bishop of Worcester's  
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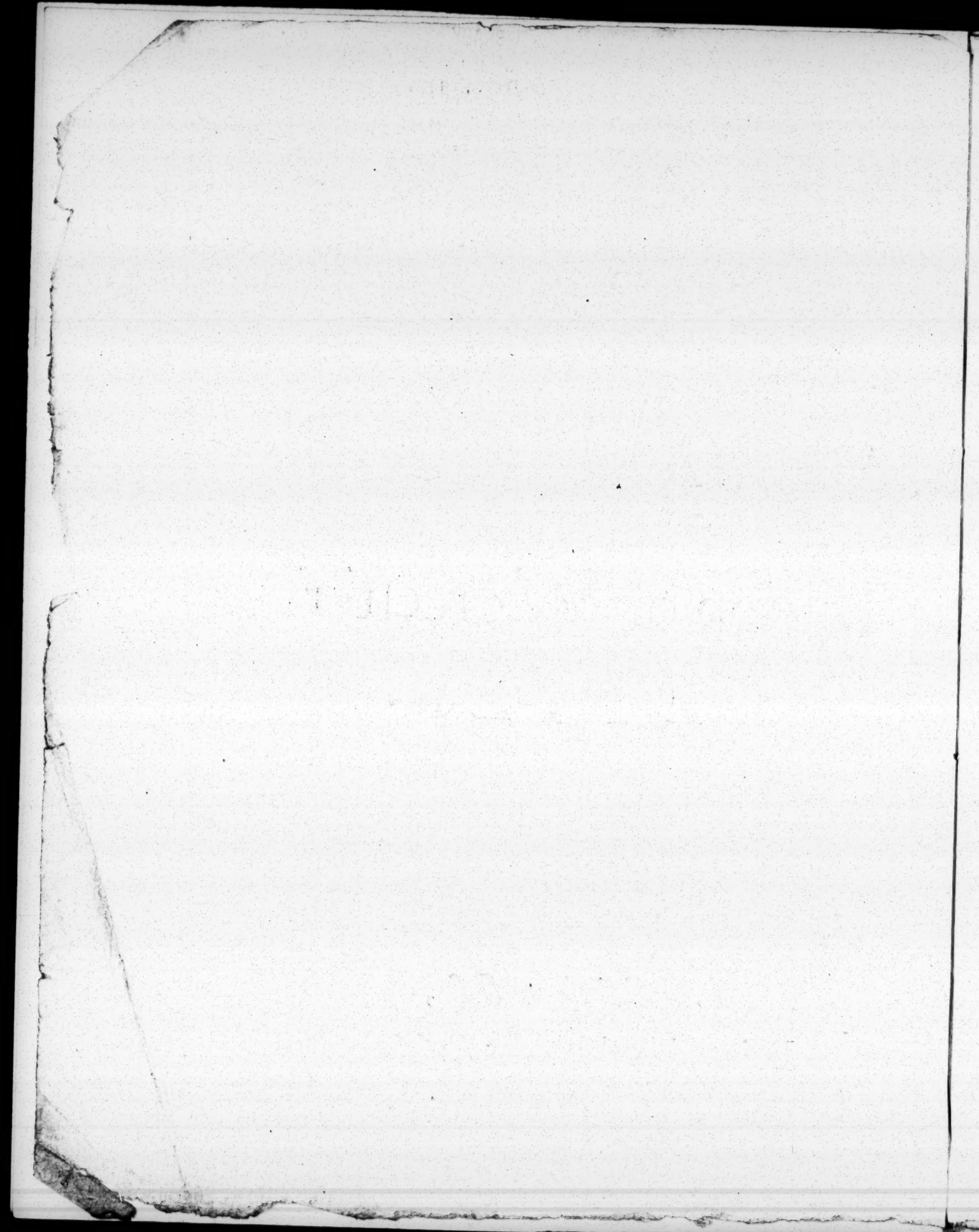


*Edward Bayeslaw*

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LONDON,  
Printed in the Year, 1662.









*Honourable and Worthy Sir,*

25 F 416.0 L  
I Am to thank You for the last piece of Diver-  
tisement you gave me, in sending the Bishop of  
*Worcester's* Letter, and I wish you would have  
let me enjoyed the satisfaction I took in reading  
it, without obliging me to give You my sense  
upon it: For besides my unwillingness to med-  
dle in a Personal quarrell, it will not, I think, be very safe  
for any to engage against so angry an adversary, which I shall  
be thought to do, though I resolve to speak nothing but Truth  
in the Character I intend to give of him; And it is briefly this,  
That, in fewer leaves I never yet read more Passion, which is  
so very predominant, that his disorderly & abrupt stile doth al-  
together partake of it; so that the Bishops best way will be,  
to get his Heat mistaken for Zeal, for else it may justly be ac-  
counted something that hath a worse Name, and which, in the  
Dog-daies will be very dangerous.

This being, Sir, my Judgement upon the whole Letter,  
You may well expect that I should make it good, by an in-  
duction from particular instances; but before I do this I must  
deal impartially, and assure you, that as to the main Contro-  
versie, I think the Bishop hath much the better of Mr. *Baxter*:  
For if the Question between them, was as Dr. *Gunning* and  
Dr. *Pearson* do attest, such a command is so evidently lawfull,  
that I shall much wonder if Mr. *Baxter* did ever dispute it;  
and till he doth clearly disprove that that was not the thing in  
Question, I must needs think that he hath much forgot him-  
self in making an Imperfect and Partial Relation.

Setting therefore aside the business of that particular Contest (wherein You see how much I am inclined to favour the Bishop) there are other things in his Letter of general concernment, which I think liable to just Exception; As

First, That he supposeth there is so strict an Union, and so inseparable a Dependance between *Kings and Bishops*, that *they must stand and fall together; and all who are enemies to the one, must needs be enemies to the other*. I know very well this Axiom is much talked of, and some advantage may be taken to confirm it, from the event of our late Warres: You know likewise, Sir, how much my Judgement is for the Order of Bishops; and how Passionate a Lover I am both of the Kings Person and Government, but yet, being thus called by You to declare the truth, though contrary to my own Humour and Interest, I must needs say, 1. It is clear from Story, that *Kings* were in all parts of the world, in their most flourishing Estate, before ever *Bishops* were heard of; and no reason can be given, why what hath once been, may not with the same terms of convenience be again. 2. *Bishops* as they are by Law established in *England*, are purely the *Kings subordinate Ministers, in the management of Ecclesiastical Affairs*; which his Majesty may conferre upon what order of men he pleases, though they be as much *Lay persons* as You and I are. It is therefore very injurious to the *Kings Authority*, to averre that He could not otherwise uphold and maintain it, then by preserving the Undue, and, as some think, Antichristian Dignity and Prelation of his inferiour Officers. 3. *Bishops* are so little usefull to support the *Regal Dignity* (which is founded upon a distinct Basis of its own) that upon enquiry it will be found, how none have been greater enemies to the True and Undoubted Sovereignty of Princes, then some Bishops themselves: for by their Officious, and scarce warrantable, intermeddling in Civil Affairs; by their Absurd and Insignificant



significant distinguishing between *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical Causes* (of which last they have alwaies made themselves sole Judges) they mangle the Kings Authority, and as to *Church-matters* (which may be extended as far as they please) they leave the King nothing of *Supremacy* but the Name. The *Pope* of *Rome* therefore (who is the great Father of all such Bishops) hath improved this Notion and Distinction so farre that *in ordine ad spiritualia*, he hath laboured to subject all Civil Empires unto his sole Jurisdiction. So that if the Bishop of *Worcester's* Rule hold good, of *Crimine ab uno — Disce omnes*, i.e. *That all men who are of a Party, may be judged of by the miscarriages of one*, then I must leave it to You to judge, what all those Bishops, that are of the Bishop of *Worcester's* complexion, do really drive at, by the fatal example of that one Bishops Usurpation: For

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Secondly, That Assertion, *that the Bishop of Worcester* (and consequently every other Bishop) *is the sole Pastor of all the Congregations in his Diocess*, if it be at all defensible, I am sure can be defended only by those Arguments, which are commonly alleadged to maintain the *Popes Supremacy* over all Churches whatever. For since a Bishop can no otherwise discharge his duty herein, then by providing *Substitutes*, what hinders but the *Bishop of Rome* may as well oversee a million of Churches, as the Bishop of *Worcester* five hundred? Since if Deputation be lawfull, more or lesse compasse and circuit of ground doth not at all alter the case. I forbear to urge how contrary this Practise is to the Doctrine of the Apostles, both *Paul* and *Peter* (I hope the Bishop will not take it ill that I do not call them *Saints*, for these *Holy men* do not need any stile of Honour out of the *Popes Kalender*.) When *Paul* had sent for the *Elders of the Church at Ephesus*, he bids them *to feed the Church of God, over which* (not he himself, by his sole Authority, as Bishop of the Diocesse, but) *the Spirit*

Page 2, & 3.

Act. 20. 28.



1 Pet. 5. 2.

*Spirit of God had made them* Επισκοπες i. e. *Overseers*, or to use the proper stile, *Bishops*. And Peter commands his *Fellow-Elders*, (for so doth that Apostle condescend to call himself) *to feed the Flock which was among them*, Επισκοπεῖτε *Overseeing*, or *Acting the Bishops*, not (like the Bishop of Worcester) as *Lording it over Gods Heritage*, but as *Patterns of the Flock*. From which places we learn, not only that those two so much controverted Names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, are without distinction ascribed to the same Persons, but likewise, that whoever *feed the Flock*, are, *under Christ* (whom the Apostle there stiles the *Chief-Shepherd*) the next and immediate *Pastors* of the *Flock*; and to extend the *Pastoral Power* beyond the actual care of *Feeding*, is a Notion altogether unscriptural, and likewise leaves us no bounds where to fix, till we come to center upon some one *Universal Pastor*, who may claim this Power over the whole world, by the same parity of reason, that a Bishop doth over one *Dio-cesse*.

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P. 3, 6, 8, &amp; 9.

Thirdly, It seems to be a Light, and (to say no more) unseemly trifling with sacred Scripture, to affirm that those words of our Saviour concerning such as *come not in by the door*, and therefore are *Theeves and Robbers*, ought to be understood of such *Ministers*, as *preach to Congregations without the Bishops License*. Which thing, the Bishop (in great Heat and Earnestnesse, as if he had done very well in it) tels us more then once, that it was *the Principal reason why he silenced Mr. Baxter*. Truly if this practise be justifiable, and those who design themselves *to preach the Gospel*, must, besides their *Ordination*, procure a *License from a Bishop*, to do that, which a *Woe* is denounced against, if they offer to omit, then 1. I see not what *Ordination* signifies, since the Power that then is given, no Authority from Man can take away, any more then dissolve the Contract of a Marriage, much lesse impeach and

and hinder the free use of it, except for Moral and notoriously vicious Misdemeanours. 2. For one *Minister of the Gospel* (for certainly a *Bishop* is no more) to Silence another, and that for no better Reason, then because his Fellow-Minister is desirous to preach the Gospel without a *new License*, this is an abuse of Dominion, which as our Saviour doth nowhere countenance, so the first Ages of the Church were altogether unacquainted with. For the *Bishops* instance of our Saviours *putting to silence the Scribes and Pharisees* is both Impertinent and False, because our Saviour did only *silence them by Argument*, which the Bishop may do whenever he is able; but what is that to an Authoritative and Imperious commanding men to be Silent. Besides, even then when our Saviour was most strict in pronouncing *Woes* against the *Pharisees*, in that very Chapter, he is so far from forbidding the *Pharisees* to preach, that he commands his Disciples both to Hear and to Obey their Doctrine. So that since the Bishop will needs have the *Presbyterians* to be *Pharisees*, let him but allow them the same Liberty of Teaching the People, as our Saviour did the other, and I believe they will not (at least were I a *Presbyterian* I should not) envy his Lordship, either his Title or Maintenance, how undue and unmerited soever they both be. And though the Bishop is pleased to say that the *Presbyterians* preach nothing but *Sedition and Treason* (which is most false, as being directly contrary to their declared Principles) yet the *Pharisees* taught something worse, and that was *Blasphemy*: Yet our Saviour (who sure had more power, and withall, more care of his Church then the Bishop of *Worcester*) did not go about by Force to prohibit them. I wish therefore, that this Bishop and the rest of his Brethren (if any are Cholerick and Testy enough to be of his mind) would consider, that as by silencing their *Fellow-Ministers*, for such frivolous and slight pretences, they usurp a Power,



a Power, which Christ never gave, so at the last day he will not thank them for the Exercise of it.

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Fourthly, How consistent with the *Civil Peace* (for as to *Christian Charity*, the whole thing is but a *Letter of defiance* against it) the *Bishops Distinction* is about the *Act of Indemnity*, and (the so much forgotten) *Act of Oblivion*, I hope his Majesty and the Parliament will in due time consider. For he is so hardy as to tell us, *That the King by it, only pardoned the corporal Punishment; but the Church had not, nor ought not to forgive the Scandal, till honourable amends were made her by Confession and Recantation.* Where by speaking of the *Church*, as distinct from the *State* (I mean in point of *Coercive Jurisdiction*) the Bishop would make us believe, that after his Majesty and the Parliament have forgiven men their Civil Crimes, there is still another Power, which he calls *the Church*, unto which they are still accountable, even so far as to make a *Publick Recantation*. Here I wish the Bishop would have spoken out of the Clouds, and plainly told us, what he meant by *the Church*: For if it be a *Congregation of the Faithful met together for the Worship of God*, as the Definition of Scripture, and of the *Church of England* is in the 39 Articles; this will not at all advantage him, since such a Church hath no Coercive or Imposing Power: But if he means the *Hierarchy* or *Ecclesiastical State*, by *Arch-Bishops, Bishops, &c.* there can be nothing more False, or more dishonourable unto our Civil Government, than to affirm that it lies in their power, not only to Punish, but likewise to exact a *Recantation*, for those Faults which the *King and Parliament* have not only pardoned, but under severe Penalties commanded should never more be remembered: And therefore I doubt not, but they will resent this Malicious and Ill-grounded Fancy. And since the Bishop is so over-zealous for the very Letter of the Law, when it imposes *Ceremonies*, give me leave a little to wonder, that one of his



his Profession and Place in the Church should so unchristianly go against it, when it enjoyns Moderation and Forgiveness as to Civil Injuries. Such as he, who make the Law, instead of being a *Buckler* to protect *Converts*, a *Sword* only to cut off all such as were once Offenders, labour what they can to make men Desperate, and thereby render the Peace of the Nation, and, in that, the Prosperity and Welfare of his Majesty very Insecure and Hazardous. For what can more enrage Men to take Wild and Forbidden courses, then to see even Preachers of the Gospel strive to widen their Wounds, and, contrary to their own former Professions, to pull off that Plaister, which the Wisdom of our State Physicians had provided to heal our Distempers.

Fifthly, It is Bold and Impious ( I know not how to express it more mildly ) what he affirms, that *If to command an Act, which by accident may prove an occasion of sin, be sinful, then God himself cannot command any thing.* For, though as I said before, I will by no means own that Assertion, yet, a thing, which by accident may become sinful, may be Unlawful, in another to command, for want of sufficient Authority. whereas Gods Sovereign power doth without dispute or Controversie make all his Commands to be Just; and therefore his Name ought not to be mentioned in our trivial disputes, because every such vain Use of it, is nothing but a diminution and lessening of his Greatness.

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Sixthly, *That an Offence, to which a disproportionable Penalty is annexed, is not to be measured by the Quality of the Act considered in it self, but by the mischievous consequences it may produce;* whether this ought to hold good in Civil Laws, becomes neither the Bishop nor me to dispute: but in Divinity nothing can be more False and Dangerous. For to impose, in the Worship of God as necessary circumstances of it, things confessedly trivial and needless; and, upon the forbearance of

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them,

them, to debar any from the benefits first of Christian, and then of Civil Communion; is a thing which hath not the least pretence of Scripture or Primitive practice to justify it: For our Saviour tells us, *That whoever were not against him, were for him*; and the Apostle bids us *to receive our weak Brother, and not to judge*, much less to *burden his Conscience*. Unto which *Sacred Canon*, nothing can be more directly contrary, then what the Bishop most Incompassionately tells us, *That the Laws do well to punish, even with non-admission to the Sacrament, such as will not, or perhaps dare not, kneel*. And the Reason he gives is equally *Apocrypha*, *Because*, saith he, *it becomes not the Law-givers to endanger the Churches peace for their sake*: As if first, It did not much more become all Law-givers, in the things of God, to observe the Law of Christ, which is a Law of *Love and Liberty*. Secondly, As if the Churches peace would not be much more endangered, by the Pressing of things doubtful, than by the forbearance of them. For since by the enforcing of such things, as God hath nowhere commanded, our Christian liberty is infringed; from hence it follows, that, if we ought not, yet we lawfully may refuse, to submit unto such Impositions; as our Saviour did, *in not washing his hands before Meat*; and the Apostle Paul, in the case of *Circumcision*.

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Seventhly, As for the chaine of Consequences, which the Bishop links and ties together. As that *from Diversity in external Rites, ariseth Dislike*; *from Dislike, Enmity*; *from Enmity, Opposition*; *thence, Schism in the Church, and Sedition in the State*: For proof of which he doth very virulently instance in our Unhappy times. To prevent which, he tells us, *That the State cannot be safe without the Church, nor the Church without Unity, nor Unity without Uniformity, nor Uniformity without a strict and rigorous Imposition*. To all this I answer, that it is a meer Rope of Sand, and the Parts of his Chain do as little hang



hang together, as *Sampsons Foxes* did before they were tied by the Tails, which course the Bishop hath imitated, not forgetting to put in even the *Firebrand* it self to make up the comparison. For 1. Nothing is more clear than that there hath been, nay ought to be, *Diversity in external Forms*, without any *Dislike* at all as to the Person of another: For the *Apostles that preached to the Circumcision* gave the right of Fellowship unto the *Apostles of the Gentiles*; although their *Outward Rites* in publick Worship, were far more different, than those, which, by any of the most distant persuasions, are now practised in *England*. 2. The *State* may be preserved, without the least reference to the *Church*, unless it turns Persecuter of it; as is evident in those 300 years before *Constantines* time, in which there was no Church at all legally countenanced; and for some scores of years after, both the *Christians* and *Gentiles* were equally advanced and favoured. 3. *Unity*, I mean such as Christ came to establish (which is an *Unity* in heart and spirit) doth not in the least depend upon *Uniformity*, but upon *Charity*, i.e. a Christian and a Candid forbearance of one another in things *Circumstantial*, when we agree in the *Essentials of Worship*; which is a thing, that meer *Civility* would reach, though Religion were silent in it. And whereas the Bishop thinks he hath got some advantage, by reviving the memory of our late *Civil Wars* (which, were he either Christian or Man enough, he would wish, were eternally buried in silence) I must (to use his own Phrase) *tell him in his ear*, that our Wars did not arise from the separation of Conscientious Dissentors, but from the violence and Fury of Unconscionable Imposers: Who would not allow their Brethren (who desired nothing more than to live peaceably by them) that sober Liberty, which the *Law of God* commanded, and no Law of Man could justly deprive them of. And whether the publick maintaining of the very same Positions and



Practises, may not in time beget the same Feuds and Animosities, although, this Bishop cares not, yet I doubt not, but his Majesty, as he now doth, so will alwaies graciously consider.

Eighthly, Whether, as to the matter of Fact, the *French Protestants* do enjoyn *standing* at the *Sacrament*; & the *Dutch*, *kneeling*; I will labour to enform my self of some more Unbyassed witness than this Bishop; for in the *Ecclesiastical Laws* of those *Churches*, which I have carefully perused, I can find no such matter. But if they did so, this would not at all justifie the Imposition of *Kneeling*; because 1. The Question is *de Jure*, whether it be lawful to prescribe any one such certain Posture, without submitting to which, it shall not be lawful to admit any to the Sacrament, and till the Affirmative of this be proved by Scriptures, Examples, and Instances from the Practice of men, will not satisfie a doubting conscience. 2. Neither of those fore-mentioned Postures are so much to exception as *Kneeling*; because this last is manifestly more superstitious, for 1. It varies most of any from the *First Pattern*. 2. It hath been monstrously abused by the *Papists* to *Idolatry*; which alone renders it most Unsafe to be practised, and most Unwarrantable to be imposed: Especially, till it be again explained, as in the very first *Liturgy* of all it was; which I particularly mention, to shew how little our *Reformation* since *Edm. 6th.* time, hath been improved.

Lastly, As it was needlessly, so was it likewise Uncharitably done, to revile the whole body of *Presbyterians* for the Faults of *Mr. Baxter*; upon supposition that either he is a *Presbyterian*, or so culpable as the Bishop would make him. For since every man is to bear his own Burden, what Bible did the Bishop find it in, that he might, without scruple, asperse a whole order of Men, for the pretended miscarriage of one; who, by the Bishop's own Confession, was not of so Amicable and com-

compliant a Temper as the rest: And therefore certainly they ought not to be brought in as Parties in that crime of Unpeaceableness, from which the Bishop just before had absolved them: but choler spoys the Memory; and, sure his Brethren the Bishops would not take it well, of a *Presbyterian*, should he cry out *Crimine ab uno, disce omnes*—*See what manner of Spirit these Bishops are of, and judge them all by the Bishop of Worcesters example.* Truly, Sir. I am a little angry, when I consider how much this one mans Indiscretion hath exposed all of the same Order to Censure; For were they all like him (which I do not, nor dare not think) I should not scruple to pray heartily, what the *Bishop* doth in scorn concerning the Preachers — *Lord deliver us from such Bishops.* And let all the People say, *Amen.*

Thus, Sir, you see how willing I am to serve you in proposing my Exceptions, the fuller prosecution of which I must leave to some other Pen, more able both in *Divinity* and *Policy*, who may convince, both the Bishop and the World, that it is not yet time to low such *Taxes*; This Age is a little too knowing to be gulled with an *Audacious*, or to take every thing for Oracle which a Bishops Passion dictates. But before I ease you of your Trouble in reading this, I will crave leave to give you a Taste of the *Reverend Father's* deep wisdom in two or three particulars —

1. In that he declaims, so fiercely, as if he would crack his Girdle, against all those *who force all Communicants to come unto them and be particularly examined before they admit them to the Sacrament.* Indeed, Sir, this was an Imposition, as no way Justifiable, so, for ought I can hear, no where practised. The Custome being that men were only once for all examined, at their first coming to the Sacrament; which the Bishop himself allows under other Names of being Catechised and Instructed. It was therefore wisely done of the Bishop, this cold weather,



weather, to set up a *Man of straw*, and then get himself heat by threshing it.

2 It is me-thinks very Politickly done to Exclaime against the poor *Covenant*; and, in great zeal, to wish all the *Books*, which defend it, were burnt by the *Authors*, to save the *Hangman* a labour. For here let his Adversary do what he can, the Bishop will be too hard for him: For if he takes no notice of the *Covenant*, the Bishop clearly gains the Cause, if he ventures to assert it, he shall presently be confuted with a *Confiscation*. So that under the shelter of this Unanswerable *Dilemma* I leave him, lest I should be gored with the Horns of it. And this I speak, Sir, as one that, though I never took, but alwaies opposed the *Covenant*; yet I have a very good opinion of many that did, and withal a great Tenderness for the lawful Part of an Oath, after it is once solemnly taken. I will only adde this, That since that Oath hath been so generally taken, even by those that were most Active in his late Majesties service; and several times ventured their Lives, to signalize their Loyalty; I think the Ashes of it (since it was burnt by Publick Authority) had much better have been suffered to rest quietly, than thus to be blown up and scattered abroad by the Bishop's furious Breath, when no occasion was given him so much as to mention it.

Lastly, I can never enough commend the Bishops wisdom, in resolving so angrily never to write again; for he is Old, and hath Travelled far, and knows that it is much easier to speak rash and unjustifiable things than to defend them. And therefore he deals with those, that he hath provoked, as witty School-boyes do with their Companions, first he hits them a box on the Ear, and then very discreetly retreats, and fairly runs away But if *Goliath*, who took upon him to defie the Host of *Israel*, should, as soon as ever he had done, have sneaked out of the Field, and thought he had done manfully enough



in making a Bold Challenge, and in shewing his Teeth at them; I believe the *Philistines* would hardly have thanked him for that Empty shew of Valour, whereby he could not Conquer, but only enrage the Enemy. And whether the Bishops will not have the same opinion of this over-forward and unwary Champion of theirs, I hope, Sir, you will neither enquire your self, nor desire that I should: For I have already done enough to shew how much I am,

Jan. 21.

SIR,

*Your most humble Servant*

D. E.

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